THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN *and* CHILDREN IN THE CONGO STATE

1895-1904

An Appeal to the Women of the United States of America

Selections from a pamphlet of E. D. MOREL, with comment by ROBERT E. PARK, Ph. D., of the Congo Reform Association

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TREATMENT OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE CONGO STATE

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I

Most savages in most respects are children or more properly adolescents of adult size. Their faults and their virtues are those of childhood and youth. They need the same careful and painstaking study, lavish care and adjustment to their nature and needs. The inexorable laws of forcing, precocity, severity, and overwork produce similar results for both. Primitive peoples have the same right to linger in the paradise of childhood; to war upon them is to war upon children. To commercialize and oppress them with work is child labor on a large scale.

G. Stanley Hall,
Adolescence, its Psychology, Physiology, etc.
Vol. 2, page 649. 1904.

NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER IN THE CONGO, IN 1895.

When calamity, in the shape of war, famine, pestilence or economic depression, falls upon a people, it is the women and children who suffer most.

What is true among civilized is also true among savage peoples, with this difference: that among savages the merciless process of natural selection,

of which war, pestilence and famine are the appropriate instruments, is more ruthless than elsewhere. Again it is the women and children who suffer most.

In recent years a great calamity has come upon the peoples of the Congo basin. These peoples,—for there are hundreds of different tribes inhabiting the broad valley of the Congo and its tributaries,—who display in their character and temperament more than any other race the aptitudes and manners of children, have for centuries been subjected to the cruel oppressions of the slave trade, but they have survived. Their racial youth and habitual light-heartedness have preserved them under hardships which, in the course of a few generations, have swept other savage races from the face of the earth.

But in recent years a Power more relentless and more destructive than that of the Arab slave trade which it superseded has arisen in Congoland. Armed with all the machinery of modern civilization, railways, telegraph lines and weapons of precision; steeled, against all human feeling of pity, by a blind and well-nigh fanatical belief in material progress for its own sake, this great new Power has spread itself systematically and remorselessly, with incredible waste of native life, over the land and the peoples of the Congo basin, crushing out, with a hurried and irreverent greed for "results," the social institutions, the lives and the very desire for existence of the peoples that it gave the most solemn pledges to protect. In the place of the native institutions this same Power has erected a tinsel civilization foreign to the soil, the people and every permanent interest of humanity and true civilization in that region.

In this process of so-called "moral and material regeneration" of the country, it is again the women

and children who have suffered most. Volumes of testimony have been gathered together to show the evil effects of the cruel system under which the country is at present administered. In the brief citations which follow it is not possible to give an understanding, but it may be possible to arouse interest,—or at least to dispel the indifference with which we in America have accustomed ourselves to look upon the fate of the black people of equatorial Africa. The excerpts which are given in the article which follows are taken from the journal of E. J. Glave, who went out to Africa in 1883 as a member of the International Association, of which Henry M. Stanley was the agent. After working in the country for nearly six years, Glave returned to England in 1889. In 1894 he went back to Africa, this time as an "independent traveller anxious to observe and report faithfully upon the general condition of things in the country." He never returned from that last visit in Africa, but died at Matadi on May 12, 1895. His statements are the more important as they are the comments of a man who knew the country, the people and their possibilities, and described, in the light of the aspirations of the pioneers whose labors made the present State possible, the actual results which had been achieved at that time under the rule of King Leopold.*

At the beginning of his journey, Glave is perplexed and incredulous as he notes the contrast between actual conditions and the professed aims and ideals that were proclaimed to the world when the state was founded. This feeling slowly gives place to one of indignation and abhorrence as he

* "His conscientiousness, his inflexible determination to do the most that can be done in a given period, the love with which he sets about it, and the absorbing interest it has for him," commended him to Stanley, in whose service and that of the Congo government he spent six years.

gradually comprehends that these conditions are not the result of administrative failures, but are due to a deliberate policy of dealing with the natives—a policy, which in view of the obligations assumed by the Congo government at the time it took control in the Congo valley, and in view of its constant professions of benevolence and philanthropy since then, seemed to him to indicate, so far as international public opinion is concerned, an attitude on the part of the Congo government of cynical and systematic hypocrisy.

Writing from Moliro in October, 1894, Glave says:

"The Belgians are rather free at flogging, *even women are not exempt.*"

At this period the Congo State was engaged in substituting for Arab rule, which, with fearful slaughter, and much profit by the way of ivory loot it had succeeded in extirpating, its own beneficent administration. This is what Glave found in the Eastern district where the Arab power had been paramount: "The White officer of Kamambare has commissioned several Wangwana chiefs to make raids in the country of the Warua, and bring him the slaves. They are supposed to be taken out of slavery and freed, but I fail to see how this can be argued out. They are taken from their villages and shipped south to be soldiers, workers, etc., on the stations, *and what were peaceful families have been broken up and the different members spread about the place.* They have to be made fast and guarded for transportation or they would all run away. This does not look as though the freedom promised had any seductive prospects."

On December 8, 1894, he wrote: "The Manyema soldiers (Congo State troops) complain that the native hunters do not go after elephants. Sungula says the reason is that when the

hunters are absent, the Manyema soldiers *take their wives.* This is a heinous offence in the eyes of the natives, who have a superstition that, if the wife does not remain constant when the husband is away fighting or hunting dangerous game, the hunter will be sure to suffer serious failure, wounds or death. . . . This is no reasonable way of settling the land, it is merely persecution."

Writing from the important government station of Kabambare on December 14, Glave remarked: "In stations in charge of white men, government officers, one sees *strings of poor, emaciated old women, some of them mere skeletons, working from two to six, tramping about in gangs with a rope round their necks and connected by a rope one and a half yards apart. They are prisoners of war. In war the old women are always caught, but should receive a little humanity. They are naked, except for a miserable patch of cloth in several parts, held in place by a string round the waist. They are not loosened from the rope for any purpose. They live in the Guardhouse under the charge of black native sentries, who delight in slapping and ill-using them. Some of the women have babies, but they go to work just the same. They form indeed a miserable spectacle, and one wonders that old women, although prisoners of war, should not receive a little more consideration; at least their nakedness might be hidden."*

On December 21 he places on record seeing *"an old woman prisoner who had died, being dragged to burial by her fellow prisoners in the rope gang."*

On December 29, writing from the village of Kestro, he describes how the Government soldiers have taken *"nearly all the women and children"* from the villages ruled over by the Chief Kitete.

Early in January, 1895, Glave was at Bayonge. While there, a Government expedition arrived,

fresh from fighting the Uzimbu people. "Many natives are said to have been killed and thirty prisoners taken, *mostly women.*"

These incidents were invariably connected with the Government raids for ivory or in forcing the people to collect rubber.

On January 24, 1895, at Riba-Riba, Glave wrote: "The chain-gang is always a disgusting sight to see, *as those confined are generally old women, reduced to skeletons by want of liberty, hard treatment by the sentries, and hunger. Five women who had deserted were in chains at Riba-Riba; all were cut very badly, having been most severely chicotted or flogged.*"

The flogging he describes very minutely. The *chicotte* with which the punishment is inflicted is a terrible weapon, and a few blows bring blood. "To flog men with this instrument," he says, "is bad enough, *but it is far worse when inflicted on women and children. Small boys of ten and twelve are often most harshly treated. At Kasongo there is a great deal of cruelty displayed. I saw two boys very badly cut. At Nyangwe and Riba-Riba boys are punished by beating on the hands.* I conscientiously believe that a man who receives one hundred blows is often nearly killed, and has his spirit broken for life."

Travelling down the Congo, Glave reached Basonko at the mouth of the Aruwimi. Writing from there on February 21, 1895, he reports: "The natives are compelled to transport in their canoes all State loads for nothing; also to provide work people for the station, *generally women.* . . . The State has not suppressed slavery. . . . *Arabs were sent* (*by the Government*) *to punish the natives; many women and children were taken, and twenty-one heads were brought to the falls* (*Stanley falls*), *and have*

been used by Captain Rom as a decoration round a flower-bed in front of his house."

And from *Coquilhatville* on March 5:

"We are taking down (*i. e.,* on the Government steamer on which he travelled) one hundred slaves—*mere children*—all taken in unholy wars against the natives. . . . War has been waged all through the district of the Equateur and *thousands of people have been killed and homes destroyed. This forced commerce is depopulating the country."*

The next entry is:

"Left Equateur at 11 o'clock this morning, after taking on a cargo of *one hundred small slaves,* principally *boys seven or eight years old, with a few girls among the batch, all stolen from the natives.* The commissaire of the district (*i. e.,* the Government official in supreme charge) is a violent tempered fellow. *While arranging to take on the hundred small slaves, a woman who had charge of the youngsters was rather slow in understanding his orders; he sprang at her, slapped her in the face,* and, as she ran away, *kicked her. They talk of philanthropy and civilization! Where it is I do not know."*

From Lukolela on March 8, he wrote:

"Very few people came on the beach to-day; in old times crowds thronged the place. *The one hundred youngsters on board are ill cared for by the State; most of them are quite naked, with no covering for the night. They make small fires, and huddle round these for warmth. Many are getting the germs of disease sown in their little bodies. Their offence is that their fathers and mothers fought for a little independence. Most white officers out in the Congo are averse to the india-rubber policy of the State, BUT THE LAWS COMMAND IT."*

His final summing up of the sights he had himself witnessed, he wrote at Matadi on April 25, 1895. This is what he wrote:

The occupation of the territories of the Congo Free State by the Belgians is an enormous expense, and the Administration is making most frantic efforts to obtain a revenue. . . . In the fighting consequent upon this policy, owing to the inability or disinclination of the natives to bring in rubber, slaves are taken—men, women and children, called in State documents Liberes (*i. e.,* freed slaves). These slaves or prisoners are most of them sent down stream, first to Leopoldville. There the children are handed over to a Jesuit mission to be schooled, and to receive military training from a State officer established at the mission for that purpose. In two years this Catholic mission has buried three hundred of these poor, unfortunate children, victims of the inhuman policy of the Congo Free State.

On the "Ville de Bruxelles," the big State boat upon which I descended the Congo, we took on board at the Equateur 102 little homeless, motherless, fatherless children, varying from four years to seven or eight, among them a few little girls. Many of them had frightful ulcers, which showed no sign of having been attended to, although there was a State doctor at the Equateurville Station. . . . As they were huddled together on the lower decks of the boat on the damp, chill mornings, shivering with cold, death was marking many more for hasty baptism and a grave at the Jesuit mission near Leopoldville.

If the Arabs had been the masters it would be styled iniquitous trafficking in human flesh and blood; but being under the administration of the Congo Free State, it is merely a part of their *philanthropic* system of *liberating the natives.*

Mr. Glave's story was written in the winter of 1894 and 1895. The rubber industry of the Congo State was then in its infancy. There was still trade with the natives. What has followed?—we shall see.

II

Natives of Africa cannot be taught that there are blessings in civilization if they are permitted to be oppressed and to be treated as unworthy of the treatment due to human beings, to be despoiled and enslaved at will by a licentious soldiery. The habit of regarding the aborigines as nothing better than pagan *abid* or slaves dates from Ibrahim Pasha, and must be utterly suppressed before any semblance of civilization can be seen outside the military settlements. When every grain of corn, and every fowl, sheep, goat and cow which is necessary for the troops is paid for in sterling money or its equivalent in necessary goods, then civilization will become irresistible in its influence, and the gospel even may be introduced; but without impartial justice, both are impossible, certainly never when preceded and accompanied by spoliation, which I fear was too general a custom in the Soudan.—HENRY M. STANLEY, in preface to "Darkest Africa."

REPORT OF AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATOR.
1904.

Glave's journal was first given to the world in a series of articles entitled, "New Conditions in Central Africa," published in the "Century Magazine."* The effect of these revelations upon the public, particularly that part of the public that had hailed with enthusiasm the founding of the Free State, was one of perplexed incredulity.

*Edward James Glave's account of his observations in the Congo State were first printed in the Century Magazine. There were two articles. A first article entitled, "New Conditions in Central Africa," will be found in Vol. 53, and a second, "Cruelty in the Congo Free State," in Vol. 54.

The tradition that the Congo State was a philanthropic experiment on a grand scale, such an adventure in disinterestedness as only a king would dare conceive, and only royal munificence could carry out, had firmly established itself in the public mind. Glave himself was at first loath to believe the stories that he heard upon entering the country, and it was only after his own eyes, ears, and every other sense had been assailed with the horror of the situation that he began, with rising indignation, to realize the truth. Eight years have elapsed since Glave visited the Congo. During that time the Congo State has slowly, but persistently, extended its authority and the rubber industry over the whole vast territory committed to its charge. The Arab slave trader has been driven out, the State slavery has been substituted; the tribal wars have been suppressed, the warlike cannibal tribes have been converted into State policemen, armed with rifles, and allowed to wreak their vengeance on their inter-tribal enemies by compelling them, under the lash and rifle, to collect rubber for the State. A great railway has been built in the interior; the whole country has been parcelled out to large companies, who collect rubber as a tax for the State, receiving fifty per cent. of the profit for their services; an army of 30,000 troops aids the companies in collecting the tax. For all this machinery of civilization, the railway, the army, companies of exploitation, and the superadded judicial and administrative machinery that these entail—for all these the native pays with sweat and blood and decimating hardships.

For eight years, at an appalling expense of native life, the rubber industry has been pushed forward with unflagging energy. Rubber production has increased, trade has diminished, and the natives have disappeared.

During this time "a persistent stream of testimony," as the New York *Sun* remarks, has continued to issue from the heart of the "Dark Continent." This testimony has been upon the whole, necessarily that of casual observation. Naturally the more atrocious incidents, the things in regard to which one who complained might hope to obtain a hearing before a vast and indifferent international public, as a rule take place far from the eyes of either travellers or missionaries. In the ordinary course of things it is only accident that reveals them. The more familiar and less atrocious wrongs which it seems useless to report to a public so preoccupied are only mentioned in private letters, and never reach the great public who would not comprehend, even if it did not refuse to listen to them.

But these things accumulate. During the last two years certain Protestant missionaries have so taken to heart the sufferings of the natives that they have made systematic effort to get detailed information for the purpose of bringing these facts to the knowledge of the civilized world. In July, August and September, 1903, Rev. A. E. Scrivener, an English missionary of the Baptist denomination, made an expedition into the *Domaine de la Couronne,* the private preserve of the King, where no white man, not an agent of the king or one of his companies, is ever known to have been. Since then systematic observation in other quarters, remote from the mission stations, has been made by other missionaries. Finally, owing to the persistent complaints that were made to it through mssionary and peace societies, who had become acquainted with the situation there, the British Government sent its official representative, Roger Casement, Consul at Boma, on an expedition into the interior to learn to what extent the complaints constantly reaching it could be es-

tablished by testimony. His report is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable official documents ever issued, and seems to have startled for a moment even the immovable sovereign of the Congo.

One impression made upon Mr. Casement in his journey into the interior of the State was that of the appalling diminution of the population; for example, in one locality he says, "During the rubber wars the *population has decreased sixty per cent.*" But our interest is only with his testimony concerning women and children.

At Leopoldville, capital of the State for the Upper Congo, he thus describes a hospital for natives:

"When I visited the three mud huts which serve as hospital, all of them dilapidated, and two with the thatched roofs almost gone, I found seventeen sleeping sickness patients, male and female, lying about in the utmost dirt. Most of them were lying on the bare ground—several out on the pathway in front of the houses, and one, a *woman,* had fallen into the fire just prior to my arrival (while in the final, insensible stage of the disease), and had burned herself very badly. She had since been well bandaged, but was still lying out on the ground with her head almost in the fire, and while I sought to speak to her, in turning, she upset a pot of scalding water over her shoulder. All of the seventeen persons I saw were near their end, and on my second visit, two days later, the 19th of June, I found one of them lying dead out in the open."*

Proceeding up river Mr. Casement found that the population of certain villages, consisting of 240 persons, all told, *men, women and children,* were compelled to supply Government with *one ton* of carefully prepared food-stuffs *per week,* re-

*This "hospital," it should be noted, is one of the beneficent institutions which is usually mentioned along with the railways, the steamers upon the river, etc., as marking the progress of civilization in the Congo State. It is a fitting illustration of the difference which may exist between the mere official statement and the actual existing thing.

ceiving in remuneration the princely sum of 15s. 10d. Much of the work entailed in providing this Government taxation falls *to the women.*

As an illustration of the nature of the taxation the native labors under, Mr. Casement gives several instances, among them that of the village of Mantaka.

The population of this village comprises from 600 to 800 men, women and children, who, for "the great majority of the days throughout the year" are compelled to be busily supplying this gum-copal tax, which appears to be an arduous labor. The village of Mantaka supplies six and a half tons of gum-copal per annum, value £364 (about $1,750), and *"each adult householder received for his entire year's work 1s. 4d. (about 33 cents), the value of a fowl in Mantaka."*

Many mutilated people whose hands had been cut off by soldiers in the course of the rubber wars were seen by Mr. Casement, and specific details covering many other cases were furnished to him. He mentions particularly two cases he saw personally—one of a "young boy," the other of a "boy not more than 12 years of age." An "old woman," similarly mutilated, had died a few months previous to Mr. Casement's visit. The circumstances were thus described to Mr. Casement by her niece:

> The town had been attacked by the Government troops and all had fled, pursued into the forest. This old woman (whose name was V W) had fled with her son, when he fell, shot dead, and she herself fell down beside him—she supposed she fainted. *She then felt her hand being cut off, but had made no sign. When* all was quiet and the soldiers had gone, she found her son's dead body beside her with one hand cut off and her own also taken away.

Mr. Casement makes it perfectly clear that this hand-cutting horror is not a native custom, but an

exotic introduced by Congolese officials. In this he is confirmed by many other white men of long acquaintance with the country and its people.

In another town close by, the natives complained that during a tax-collecting visit to the town *a woman had been shot through the head by a soldier.* "Another woman named L——, the wife of a man named M——, had *been taken away by the native sergeant who was with the soldiers.* He had admired her, and so took her back with him to Coquilhatville. Her husband heard she had died there of smallpox, but he did not know anything of her circumstances after she had been taken away."*

In one of the villages near Coquilhatville, the straits to which the natives are put in this respect was brought to the notice of Mr. Casement. He writes:

A father and mother stepped out, and said they had been forced to sell their son, a little boy, for 1,000 *rods, to meet their share of the fine. A widow came, and declared she had been forced, in order to meet her share of the fine, to sell her daughter, a little girl who, I judged from her description, to be about ten years of age. She had been sold to a man named Y——, who was named, for* 1,000 *rods, which had then gone to make up the fine. The little girl, our Consul subsequently ascertained, had again changed hands, and was promised in sale to a town on the north bank of the Congo, named Iberi, whose people are said to be still open cannibals.*

Continuing his journey, Consul Casement passed up the Lulongo and Lopori rivers. He gives an extract from a diary shown him by a gentleman who had recorded the impressions made upon him by conversation with one "M. P.," a government official.

*The names of places and persons designated in Mr. Casement's published report by letters have been withheld until the Congo government is willing to give proper guarantees that the witnesses will be protected from the persecutions of the officers against whom they have testified.

Each time the corporal goes out to get rubber, cartridges are given him. He must bring back all not used, and for every one used he must bring back a right hand. M. P. told me that sometimes they shot a cartridge at an animal in hunting; they then cut off a hand from a living man. As to the extent to which this is carried on, he informed me that in six months the State on the Mambogo river, had used 6,000 cartridges, which means that 6,000 people are killed or mutilated. *It means more than 6,000, for the people have told me repeatedly that the soldiers kill the children with the butt of their guns.*

Mr. Casement next chose for his inspection a little village on the main stream of the Lulongo river, designated in the official report as Q. He says:

I chose for the next inspection a town lying somewhat off this beaten track, where my coming would be quite unexpected. Steaming up a small tributary of the Lulongo, I arrived, unpreceded by any rumor of my coming, at the village of A.** In an open shed I found *two sentries of the La Lulanga Company guarding fifteen native women, five of whom had infants at the breast, and three of whom were about to become mothers.* The chief of these sentries, a man called S——, who was bearing a double-barrelled shot-gun, for which he had a belt of cartridges, at once volunteered an explanation of the reason for these women's detention. Four of them, he said, were hostages who were being held to insure the peaceful settlement of a dispute between two neighboring towns, which had already cost the life of a man. His employer, the agent of the La Lulanga Company at B** near by, he said, *had ordered these women to be seized and kept until* the Chief of the offending town to which they belonged should come in to talk over the palaver.

The remaining *eleven women,* whom he indicated, he said he had caught and was *detaining as prisoners to compel their husbands to bring in the right amount of india-rubber required of them on next market day. When I asked if it was a woman's work to collect india-rubber, he said, "No; that, of course, is a man's work." "Then why do you catch the women and not the men?" I asked. "Don't you see," was the answer, "if I caught and kept the men, who would work the rubber? But if*

I catch their wives, the husbands are anxious to have them home again, and so the rubber is brought in quickly and quite up to the mark."

Mr. Casement continues:

At nightfall the fifteen women in the shed were tied together, either neck to neck or ankle to ankle, to secure them for the night, and in this posture I saw them twice during the evening. They were then trying to huddle around a fire. In the morning the leading sentry, before leaving the village, ordered his companion in my hearing to "keep close guard on the prisoners." I subsequently discovered that this sentry, learning that I was not, as he had at first thought, a missionary, had gone or sent to inform his employer at C** that a strange white man was in the town.

When walking in the grounds of the Abir Trust, upon which the State has conferred the exclusive "exploitation" of the territories within the Lopori and Maringa valleys, Mr. Casement made the following observations:

I saw six of the local sentries going back with cap-guns and ammunition pouches to E—, after the previous day's market, and later in the day, when in the factory grounds, *two armed sentries* came up to the agent as he walked, guarding *sixteen natives,* five men tied neck by neck, *with five untied women and six young children.* This somewhat embarrassing situation, it was explained to me, was due to the persistent failure of the people of the village these persons came from to supply its proper quota of food. These people, I was told, had just been captured "on the river" by one of the sentries placed there to watch the waterway. They had been proceeding in their canoes to some native fishing grounds, and were espied and brought in. *I asked if the children also held were responsible for food supplies, and they, along with an elderly woman, were released, and told to run over to the Mission, and go to school there. This they did not do, but doubtless returned to their homes in the recalcitrant village. The remaining five men and four women were led off to the "maison des otages," under guard of the sentry.*

"On September 2," says Mr. Casement, continuing the narrative of his experiences in this dis-

trict, "I met when walking in the A. B. I. R. grounds with the subordinate agent of the factory, a file of fifteen women, under the guard of three unarmed sentries, who were being brought in from the adjoining villages, and were led past me. These women, who were evidently wives and mothers, it was explained in answer to my inquiry, had been seized in order to compel their husbands to bring in antelope or other meat which was due.

"As I was leaving Bongandanga, on the third of September, several elderly head-men of the neighboring villages were putting off in their canoes to the opposite forest, to get meat wherewith to redeem their wives, whom I had seen arrested the previous day. I learned later that the husband of one of these women brought in, two days afterwards, to the Mission station, his infant daughter, who, being deprived of her mother, had fallen seriously ill, and whom he could not feed. At the request of the missionary this woman was released on the fifth of September."

Leaving Bongandanga, the limit of his journey, on September 3, Mr. Casement returned down the Lopori and Lulongo rivers. On the ninth, at night, the natives of a village brought him *a lad* 16 *years old* "whose right hand was missing." His hand *"had been cut off by a sentry of the La Lulanga Company."* In addition to this mutilation, the lad had been "shot in the shoulder blade and, as a consequence, was deformed." The next morning many of the neighboring people came to see Mr. Casement.

They brought with them three individuals who had been shockingly wounded by gun-fire, two men and a *very small boy, not more than six years of age, and a fourth—a boy child of six or seven—whose right hand was cut off at the wrist.*

These people were immediately followed by a number of natives, who came before me, *bringing a small boy of not more than seven years of age, whose right hand was*

gone at the wrist. This child, whose name was F F, they had brought from the village of N—.

Mr. Casement calls attention to the fact that the wrongs to which he refers became, in certain instances, so notorious, and led to such outbreaks among the natives, as to become the subject of official investigation. He cites one case in which a British colored subject—a native of Lagos, who alone with three Europeans had been in the service of one of the concessionaire companies ("Compagnie Anversoise du Commerce au Congo") —sought his help. Mr. Casement says, "The facts charged against the British colored subject were, among others, that he had illegally arrested women and kept them in illegal detention at his trading stations, and it was alleged that many of these women died of starvation while thus confined. This man himself, when I visited him in Boma gaol in March, 1901, said that more than 100 women and children had died of starvation at his hands, but the responsibility for both their arrest and his own lack of food to give them was due to the orders and neglect of his superiors."

It is worthy of note that the agents condemned to long terms of imprisonment for crimes connected with the incident to which Mr. Casement refers, have already been released, although the indictment against them included on their own confession *the crucifying of* 60 *women.*

These are but instances of what one man, *unassisted by officers of the government or the agents of the rubber industry,* saw and heard in a brief visit to those points where the government is dealing directly and unreservedly with the natives. One sees the process of "civilization" here, not as described in the vague formulas of official reports, or as it appears to the casual observer making his investigation under the bland auspices of the King's officers,—but as it is, in its naked reality.

Another Point of View

But there is another point of view, too little considered, from which this process of "moral and material regeneration" of the Congo can and should be considered. Let us turn now to that.

III

What then is our neighbor? Thou hast regarded his thought, his feeling, as somehow different from thine. Thou hast said, "A pain in him is not like a pain in me, but something far easier to bear." He seems to thee a little less living than thou; his life is dim, it is cold, it is a pale fire beside thy own burning desires. . . . So, dimly and by instinct thou hast lived with thy neighbor, and thou hast known him not, being blind. Thou hast made (of him) a thing, no Self at all. Have done with this illusion, and simply try to learn the truth. Pain is pain, joy is joy, everywhere, even as in thee. In all the songs of the forest birds; in all the cries of the wounded and dying, struggling in the captor's power; in the boundless sea where the myriads of water-creatures strive and die; amid all the countless hordes of savage men; in all sickness and sorrow; in all exultation and hope, everywhere, from the lowest to the noblest, the same conscious, burning, wilful life is found, endlessly manifold as the forms of the living creatures, unquenchable as the fires of the sun, real as these impulses that even now throb in thine own little selfish heart. Lift up thy eyes, behold that life, and then turn away, and forget it as thou canst; but, if thou hast known that, thou hast begun to know thy duty.

PROF. JOSIAH ROYCE,
Religious Aspects of Philosophy, quoted by PROF. WILLIAM JAMES in his "Talks to Teachers."

INCIDENTS OF THE "RUBBER WARS," TOLD BY CONGO CHILDREN.

It is a singular fact in regard to this controversy, in which, particularly from the side of the Congo government, so much is heard about the rights of nations, the interests of rubber merchants and the bold enterprise of the king, that one hears

almost nothing in regard to the rights and interests of the native. In this struggle, in which the future, indeed the very existence, not only of himself, but of his race is at stake, he is a mute, helpless, uncomprehending spectator. It is from others, mostly, that we know what there is to know of his sad story. Others have described to us the wasted villages, the troops of women toiling in the chains, the herds of orphan children, surplusage of wasting wars, huddled, naked and shivering on the decks of steamers in transit from the interior to the coast. Others have told us of the severed hands, those ghastly vouchers, with which the native soldier attests the fact that his cartridges have not been "wasted." But in all this we have not heard the voice of the native himself. At most we have seen him in photographs, stretching mute, mutilated and uncomprehending hands to that world beyond the forest and the sea, whence he has been told help may some day come.

It is in this report of Roger Casement, who knows Africa, and is a friend of her people, that the native, almost for the first time, speaks to us in his own person. In this report—that is what makes it remarkable as an official document—we gather from his own lips, as it were, what a "rubber raid" is and means to the hunted wretches who have fled to the bush, or from the security of some tree top have watched the destruction of their homes and the slaughter of their families. Some of these stories, and the most pathetic ones, are those of children.

Out of many of these stories accredited by those who saw the children and heard their artless testimony, passages from four are reproduced here. The first contains the following:

When we were told by the men that the soldiers were coming we began to run away. My mother told me to

wait for her until she got some things ready to take with us, but I told her we must go now, as the soldiers were coming. I ran away and left my mother, and went with two old people who were running away, *but we were caught, and the old people were killed, and the soldiers made me carry the baskets with the things these dead people had and the hands they cut off.* . . . I went on with the soldiers. . . . Then we went into the bush to look for people, and *we heard children crying, and a soldier went over to the place and killed a mother and four children.* . . . They took me to ——, and he told me to go and stay with the soldier who had caught me. . . . I cannot tell how many people were killed, *because there were too many for me to count. They got my little sister and killed her, and threw her into a house, and set fire to the house.*"

The second tale is an account of the wanderings in the bush of two children, who, in their flight, were separated from their parents. It chronicles their fortunes and their fears, and the vain efforts of the older child during their long wanderings in the forest to save her baby sister from the soldiers who were hunting them.

After she had been a little while in the house with her little brother and sister she heard the firing of guns. When she heard that she took up her little sister and a big basket with a lot of native money in it, but she could not manage both, so she left the basket behind and ran away with the youngest child; the little boy ran away by himself. The oldest boys had gone away to wait for the soldiers at the other town. As she went past she heard her mother calling to her, but she told her to run away in another direction, and she would go on with the little sister. She found her little sister rather heavy for her, so she could not run very fast, and a great number of people went past her, and she was left alone with the little one. Then she left the main road and went to hide in the bush. When night came on she tried to find the road again and follow the people who had passed her, but she could not find them, so she had to sleep in the bush alone. She wandered about in the bush for six days, then she came upon a town. At this town she found that the soldiers were fighting there, too. Before entering the town she dug up some sweet manioc

to eat, because she was very, very hungry. She went about looking for a fire to roast her sweet manioc, but she could not find any. Then she heard a noise as of people talking, so she hid her little sister in a deserted house, and went to see those people she had heard talking, thinking they might be those from her own town; but when she got to the house where the noise was coming from she saw one of the soldier's boys sitting at the door of the house, and then also she could not quite understand their language. Then she knew that they were not her people, so she took fright and ran away in another direction from where she had put her sister. After she had reached the outside of the town she stood still, and remembered that she would be scolded by her father and mother for leaving her sister, so she went back at night. She came upon a house where the white man was sleeping; she saw the sentry on a deck chair outside in front of the house, apparently asleep, because he did not see her slip past him. Then she came to the house where her sister was, and took her, and she started to run away again. They slept in a deserted house at the very end of the town. Early in the morning the white man sent out the soldiers to go and look for people all over the town and in the houses. S S was standing outside in front of the house, trying to make her sister walk some, as she was very tired, but the little sister could not run away through weakness. While they were both standing outside the soldiers came upon them and took them both. One of the soldiers said: "We might keep them both, the little one is not bad-looking;" but the others said: "No, we are not going to carry her all the way; we must kill the youngest girl." So they put a knife through the child's stomach, and left the body lying there where they had killed it.

The story goes on to tell the further fortunes of the older child after her sister had been killed.

In the morning the soldiers wanted S S to go and look for manioc for them, but she was afraid to go out, as they looked as if they wanted to kill her. The soldiers thrashed her very much, and began to drag her outside, but the corporal (N N N) came and took her by the hand and said, "We must not kill her, we must take her to the white man." They then went back to the town where the officer in command of the troops at that date was, and they showed him the child. The officer handed her over to a soldier. At this town

she found that they had caught three people, and among them was a very old woman, and the cannibal soldiers asked the officer to give them the old woman to eat, and the officer told them to take her. The soldiers took the old woman and cut her throat, and then divided her and ate her. The little girl saw all this done.

They stayed several days at this place, then the officer asked the child if she knew all the towns round about, and she said yes, then he told her to show them the way, so that they could go and catch people. They came to a town, and found only one woman, who was dying of sickness, and the soldiers killed her with a knife. At several towns they found no people, but at last they came to a town where several people had run to, as they did not know where else to go, because the soldiers were fighting everywhere. At this town they killed a lot of people—men, women and children—and took some as prisoners. They cut the hands off those they had killed, and brought them to the officer. They spread out the hands in a row for the officer to see. After that they left to return to Bikoro. They took a lot of prisoners with them. The hands which they had cut off they just left lying, because the white man had seen them, so they did not need to take them to P.

The third story is that of a young girl who had seen two rubber raids. In the first, being small, she slid into the bush, and after three days her grandmother found her and brought her home. This is her story as reported by Mr. Casement:

She belonged to the village of R, where she lived with her grandmother. R was attacked by the State soldiers long ago. It was in S T's time. She does not know if he was with the soldiers, but she heard the bugle blow when they were going away. It was in the afternoon when they came, they began catching and tying the people, and killed lots of them. A lot of people—she thinks perhaps fifty—ran away, and she was in the crowd with them, but the soldiers came after them and killed them all but herself. She was small, and she slid into the bush. The people killed were many, and women—there were not many children. The children had scattered when the soldiers came, but she stayed with the big people, thinking she might be safe.

When they were all killed she waited in the grass for two nights. She was very frightened, and her throat

was sore with thirst, and she looked about and at last she found some water in a pot. She stayed on in the grass a third night, and buffaloes came near her and she was very frightened—and they went away. When the morning came she thought she would be better to move, and went away and got up a tree. She was three days without food, and was very hungry. In the tree she was near her grandmother's house, and she looked around and, seeing no soldiers, she crept to her grandmother's house and got some food and got up the tree again. The soldiers had gone away hunting for buffaloes, and it was then she was able to get down from the tree. The soldiers came back, and they came towards the trees and bushes calling out: "Now we see you; come down, come down!" This they used to do, so that people, thinking they were really discovered, should give themselves up; but she thought she would stay on, and so she stayed up the tree. Soon afterwards the soldiers went, but she was still afraid to come down. Presently she heard her grandmother calling out to know if she was alive, and when she heard her grandmother's voice she knew the soldiers were gone, and she answered, but her voice was very small—and she came down and her grandmother took her home.

That was the first raid. Soon afterwards when she and her grandmother were living at another village the white man again sent the soldiers. The account continues:

Neither her own people nor the U U* people, where she was living, knew there was any trouble with the Government, so they were surprised. She was asleep. Her grandmother—her mother's mother—tried to awaken her, but she did not know. She felt the shaking, but she did not mind because she was sleepy.

The soldiers came quickly into the house—her grandmother rushed out just before. When she heard the noise of the soldiers around the house, and saw her grandmother not there, she ran out and called for her grandmother; and as she ran her brass anklets made a noise, and some one ran after and caught her by the leg, and she fell and the soldiers took her.

They were taken to a canoe, and went to V V*. The soldier who caught her was the sentry there. At V V* she was kept about a week with the sentry and when the people took their weekly rations over to P* she was

sent over. The other woman who was taken was ransomed by her friends. They came after them to V V*, and the sentry let the woman go for 750 rods. She saw the money paid. Her friends came to ransom her, too, but the sentry refused, saying the white man wanted her because she was young—the other was an old woman and could not work.

One other statement, giving, in the words and from the point of view of the native, an account of a fourth expedition in the interests of civilization and the extension of the rubber industry, contains the following passage:

When we began to run away from the fight, we ran away many times. They did not catch me because I was with mother and father. Afterwards mother died; four days passed, father died also. I and an older sister were left with two younger children, and then the fighting came where I had run to. Then my elder sister called me: "U U, come here." I went. She said: "Let us run away, because we have not any one to take care of us." When we were running away we saw a lot of W W* people coming towards us. We told them to run away; war was coming. They said: "Is it true?" We said: "It is true; they are coming." The W W* people said: "We will not run away; we did not see the soldiers." Only a little while they saw the soldiers, and they were killed. We stayed in a town named X X*. A male relative called me: "U U, let us go;" but I did not want to. The soldiers came there; I ran away by myself; when I ran away I hid in the bush. While I was running I met with an old man who was running from a soldier. He (the soldier) fired a gun. I was not hit, but the old man died. Afterwards they caught me and two men. The soldiers asked: "Have you a father and mother?" I answered, "No." They said to me: "If you do not tell us we will kill you." I said: "Father and mother are dead." After that my oldest sister was caught, too, in the bush, and they left my little brother and sister alone in the bush to die, because heavy rain came on, and they had not had anything to eat for days and days. At night they tied my hands and feet for fear that I should run away. In the morning they caught three people—two had children; they killed the children.

The story continues with this incidental refer-

ence to the casual killing of ten children, who were so young as to be an encumbrance to the expedition:

When we were going on the way they killed ten children because they were very, very small; they killed them in the water. Then they killed a lot of people, and they cut off their hands and put them into baskets and took them to the white man. He counted out the hands —200 in all; they left the hands lying.

The narrative concludes with the following summary statement of the killing of an irreverent baby who laughed, the murder of one sister, and the selling into slavery of the second.

On our way, when we were coming to P*, the soldiers saw a little child, and when they went to kill it the child laughed, so the soldier took the butt of the gun and struck the child with it, and then cut off its head. One day they killed my half-sister and cut off her head, hands, and feet because she had on rings. Her name was Q Q Q. Then they caught another sister, and they sold her to the W W* people, and now she is a slave there.

These simple tragic narratives—through which one hears always the quaint and plaintive voice of the children—suggest one thing, apparently difficult to comprehend, which deserves to be insistently repeated. It is this: the present condition of the natives is not *primarily* an economic question, nor even a question of the rights of nations. It is a question of *common humanity.*

Take but one moment the point of view of the hunted native, whose lands, labor, and all whose fortunes, present and future, have been made an object of a heartless traffic—and all the flimsy scenery in which the industrious Bureaucrats have sought to stage the story of Leopold's enterprise in Africa, all the tinsel with which they have sought to plaster over and decorate the sad havoc he has wrought there, falls away, and one sees the thing

for what it is—not civilization nor progress, but ruthless, irreverent and alien meddling in the affairs and fortunes of helpless peoples, accompanied by hideous butcheries, all in the interests of a clique of mercantile free-booters.

This so-called civilization in the Congo has the curse of Midas on it. At its touch everything, the most vile and the most holy, the feasts of cannibals, and the pious prayers of saints, smoking villages, and the pale juice of the rubber vine, the lusts of savages and the wails of little children; everything has been somehow and somewhere minted into gold, and has gone to swell the returns of the Antwerp rubber market.

Do You Want an Impartial Investigation of Conditions in the Congo State?

The Congo Free State was founded in the interests of international peace, and for the protection and safe-guarding of the interests of the native peoples. All the governments of the western world participated in its formation, but among them the United States was, in all deliberations which led to the recognition of the present government of the Congo State by western Powers, first and foremost.

A Memorial was presented to Congress last spring, asking that the United States government join with the Powers of Europe in securing an international inquiry into present conditions in the Congo. Resolutions repeating or endorsing this request have since been passed by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Churches of Los Angeles; by Baptist Churches of the United States, at their meeting in Cleveland, last May; by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the Triennial National Council of the Congregational Churches at meetings held at Grinnell and Des Moines, Iowa, in October; by the General Conference of the Seventh Day Baptists at Nortonville, Kansas; by the Joint Synod of the Lutheran Churches at Fremont, Ohio, in August last; by the Peace Congress at Boston in October; and by numerous other organizations. If you desire to promote action by our government favorable to an impartial investigation, you can do so by writing to Senators of the United States and to the Congressman of your district a letter similar to that of which a model follows:

To the Honorable .....
U. S. Senator (or Member of Congress) from
.....

Dear Sir:—As one of your constitutents, I take the liberty of writing to you in regard to a Memorial now before Congress relative to the situation in the Independent State of the Congo. I respectfully request that, so far as is consistent with your judgment as to what is wise and proper, you will do what you can to secure action by our Government favorable to an impartial investigation of conditions in the Congo State. I am Very truly yours,

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For any information desired, address
THE CONGO REFORM ASSOCIATION, P. O. Box, 3707, Boston, Mass.

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH CONRAD, The Novelist, Formerly in Service on the Upper Congo, in Regard to the Congo State

* It is an extraordinary thing that the conscience of Europe, which seventy years ago put down the slave trade on humanitarian grounds, tolerates the Congo State to-day. It is as if the moral clock had been put back many hours. And yet nowadays, if I were to overwork my horse so as to destroy its happiness or physical well-being, I should be hauled before a magistrate. It seems to me that the black man—say of Upoto—is deserving of as much humanitarian regard as any animal, since he has nerves, feels pain, can be made physically miserable. But, as a matter of fact, his happiness and misery are much more complex than the misery or happiness of animals, and deserving of greater regard. He shares with us the consciousness of the universe in which we live—no small burden. Barbarism *per se* is no crime deserving of a heavy visitation, and the Belgians are worse than the seven plagues of Egypt, insomuch that in that case it was a punishment sent for a definite trangression; but in this the Upoto man is not aware of any transgression, and therefore can see no end to the infliction. It must appear to him very awful and mysterious, and I confess it appears so to me, too. The slave trade has been abolished, and the Congo State exists to-day. This is very remarkable. What makes it more remarkable is this: the slave trade was an old-established form of commercial activity; it was not the monopoly of one small country, established to the disadvantage of the rest of the civilized world, in defiance of International treaties and in brazen disregard of humanitarian declarations. But the Congo State, created yesterday, is all that, and yet it exists. It is very mysterious. One is tempted to exclaim (as poor Thiers did in 1871), "Il n'y a pas d'Europe." And the fact remains that in 1903, seventy years or so after the abolition of the slave trade (because it was cruel), there exists in Africa a Congo State, created by the act of European Powers, where ruthless, systematic cruelty towards the blacks is the basis of administration, and bad faith towards all the other States the basis of commercial policy.—Quoted by the London "Morning Post" in a review of "Leopold's Rule in Africa" by E. D. Morel.

* Mr. Conrad has narrated his experiences while in service on the Upper Congo in the story, "The Heart of Darkness," published in the volume entitled "Youth," McClure, Phillips & Co., New York, 1903

Two or three days after a fight a dead mother was found with two of her children. The mother was shot and the right hand taken off. On one side was the elder child, also shot and the right hand also taken off. On the other side was the younger child, with its right hand cut off: but the child, still living, was resting against the mother's breast. I myself saw the child.—*Extract from the testimony of Rev. E. V. Sjoblom, a Swedish Missionary of the American Baptist Missionary Union, printed in the Memorial to Congress.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION IN REGARD TO CONDITIONS IN THE CONGO FREE STATE, READ:

E. D. Morel's "Leopold's Rule in Africa."

H. Fox Bourne's "Civilization in Congoland."

"Real Conditions in the Congo Free State."

By Paul S. Reinsch, Professor of Political Science in the University of Wisconsin, *North American Review*, February, 1904.

Memorial Concerning Conditions in the Independent State of the Congo.

Presented to the Senate of the United States by John T. Morgan, Senator from Alabama.

The Congo State and Its Autocrat.

I. Leopold, Emperor of the Congo, W. T. Stead.
II. Personal Observations of Congo Misgovernment, Rev. W. M. Morrison, *American Review of Reviews*, July, 1903.

The Missionary Review of the World.

I. Belgian Treatment of Congo Natives, by E. D. Morel.
II. Instances of Belgian Cruelty in Africa, Rev. A. E. Scrivener, Bolobo Mission, Upper Congo River.

"Recent Atrocities in the Congo State."

Robert E. Park, Secretary of the Congo Reform Association, *The World To-day*, October, 1904.

"Cruelty in the Congo Country."

Booker T. Washington, *The Outlook*, October 8, 1904.